

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

99% of daily newspapers in this country are local monopolies. The number of companies controlling the majority of the mass media in this country has dropped from 50 to 10 to 6. Intense media concentration in two few hands is inherently undemocratic and unaccountable. I find it appalling that after such large mergers of the last twenty years of the media industry, that the FCC would rollback even the few "paper" restrictions left. For example, numerous companies have been granted exemptions from the newspaper-radio cross ownership rule. Michael Powell's views as reported in WIRED magazine strike me as absurd and market fundamentalist. The fact that after all the corporate scandals caused by a perversion of free market thought (subsidies for large profitable companies, rampant tax evasion by the Fortune 500, and cutbacks and tax increases for everyone else) Michael Powell adamantly refuses to enforce existing law and consistly supports the views of the large broadcasters!

To fundamentally abandon all pretense of media regulation would be a cruel joke to the First Amendment guarantee of a free press. The press is not free if the majority of the American mass media is in the pocket of six Fortune 500 companies (two of the companies are foreign!). How can allowing the last few companies to merge possibly increase competition or produce better product for the public, advertisers, and consumers? I find it Orwellian that the FCC would claim to be increasing media diversity by removing rules that would ultimately shrink the number of voices heard.

I absolutely reject the proposed changes as an media consumer and as a citizen concerned with media diversity.